



A side view of one of the long-range Wellesleys showing that the fuselage is comparatively short in relation to the wing span. The special cowling and fairing arrangements may be noted.

TRIPLE TRIUMPH

The Long Range Development Unit Breaks World's Distance Record



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TWO Vickers Wellesley mono-planes slipped out of the over-cast at Darwin, Northern Australia, just after 4 p.m. (G.M.T.) on Monday, having flown 7,162 miles non-stop from Ismailia, Egypt, in about 48 hours, beating by 856 miles the world's long-distance record set up by the Russians Gromov, Yumashev and Danilin, who flew from Moscow to California in July last year.

A third machine (which easily broke the record) was forced to land at Koepang, in the Island of Timor—400 miles from Darwin—owing to shortage of fuel. It left at 4 a.m. for Darwin and landed at 7.36.

The record was actually beaten when the Wellesleys passed the southern end of the Island of Celebes, in the Dutch East Indies.

The machines which completed the journey non-stop were manned by the following crews: (No. 1 — L.2638) Sqn. Ldr. R. Kellett (1st pilot), Flt. Lt. R. T. Gething (2nd pilot and navigator), and Pilot Officer M. L. Gaine (Signals Officer of the Unit); (No. 2 — L.2639) Flt. Lt. H. A. V. Hogan (1st pilot), Flt. Lt. R. G. Musson (2nd pilot and navigator), and Sgt. T. D. Dixon (wireless operator-mechanic). The third machine (L.2680) was manned by Flt. Lt. A. N. Combe (1st pilot), Flt. Lt. B. K. Burnett (2nd pilot and navigator), and Sgt. H. B. Gray (wireless operator-mechanic). The Signals Officer and the wireless operator-mechanics were qualified pilots.

The average speed of the Wellesleys works out at just under 150 m.p.h., compared with the 102 m.p.h. of the Russians.

Sqn. Ldr. Kellett, who is Flight Leader of the Long Range Development Unit, said on landing that he had never felt better. The flight had been excellent.

In Wellesley L.2680: Sgt. H. B. Gray, who kept wireless contact for weather warnings and sent progress reports.